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Dear Texas Oral Surgeons:

We need your help to improve cancer case reporting in Texas.

Currently, cancer patients solely diagnosed or treated in a physician's office may go unreported to the Texas Cancer Registry, Texas Department of Health; this affects the accuracy of data regarding the cancer burden in Texas. The Texas Cancer Incidence Reporting Act (Chapter 82 of the Health and Safety Code) requires that all newly diagnosed cancer cases in Texas be reported. Legislative changes were made to assure that Texas meets national standards for the completeness, timeliness, and quality of cancer incidence data. A copy of the amended law is enclosed.

This legislation includes provisions that expand the reporting of cancer to include physicians and dentists in addition to entities such as clinical laboratories and health care facilities (hospitals, ambulatory surgical centers, cancer treatment centers and others), which have already been reporting. We need your input to make this legislation and associated rules effective without being burdensome. Proposed cancer reporting rules have been shared with our advisory Cancer Data Work Group (chaired by Edward Middleman, M.D., M.P.H., F.A.C.P.), and with other members of various medical societies in order to solicit input. The rules were presented in June to the Texas Department of Health, Board of Health and are currently posted in the Texas Register as well as on our website: www.tdh.state.tx.us/tcr/rules.

We are in the process of gathering information to help identify the most cost-effective and easily implemented methodologies for the reporting of physician and oral surgeon office-based cases. The diseases most frequently involved that go unreported would appear to be: cancers of the oral cavity, cervix and prostate, cutaneous melanoma, and hematopoietic cancers such as chronic leukemia's or multiple myeloma. At this time, we anticipate that a phase-in approach will be taken and our first focus will be to gain physician reporting for the cancer types discussed above.

Your input for the successful implementation of this law is welcomed. Please feel free to send any comments or questions via our website: www.tdh.state.tx.us/tcr or you may contact Ms. Linda LG Brown, Program Specialist, Ms. Vicki Cowling, Registry Operations Manager, or Nancy directly at 1-800-252-8059 or (512) 458-7523.

Sincerely,

Nancy S. Weiss, Ph.D.
Director
Texas Cancer Registry

Edward Middleman, M.D.
Chair
Cancer Data Work Group

Don A. Lutes, D.D.S.
President
Texas Dental Association

Lawrence Frankel, M.D.
President
American Cancer Society